News

Approvers Removed from the VCS Validation Process

A recent update to the Visa Compliance System (VCS) included the removal of the R3 Mission Approver from the validation process. Program validation is the process whereby the R1 TraiNet Operator updates the Participant Status to "In-Training" within three days of the start of a U.S. training program and submits it to the VCS for verification and transference to SEVIS. SEVIS requires that this status update, indicating the exchange visitor has successfully entered the United States and arrived at her/his place of training, be updated within three days of the program start date indicated on the DS-2019 form.

In the past, the Verifier and the Approver would validate this change of status in the VCS. Due to the fact that Mission Approvers rarely, if ever, know of an exchange visitor's arrival in the U.S. they have now been removed from this process. Now, when an R1 Operator changes status and transfers/submits the data to the VCS, the Verifier will validate this change and the update will be sent directly to the Department of Homeland Security's SEVIS system. Approvers will no longer need to act on the validation request.

Selecting the Correct J Visa Category

Selection of the appropriate J visa category for U.S.-bound Exchange Visitors is based upon length of stay and type of visitor traveling on the visa. Consult the table below in order to select the appropriate category for your Exchange Visitor. A more detailed document with a decision-tree can be downloaded from the TraiNet/VCS web site at http://usaidtraining.devis.com/Documents.

VISA CATEGORY SELECTION DECISION TREE

If the visitor is…	Select Category	Limitation of Stay (minimum stay)
1. Pursuing an academic degree (MBA, PhD)	**Student**	No limit
2. Researching, teaching or lecturing with American colleagues	**Research Scholar**	(22 days) to 36 months
3. A high level government official	**Government Visitor**	(22 days) to 18 months
4. Observing, consulting or demonstrating special skills	**Specialist**	(22 days) to 12 months
5. Coming for less than 22 days	**Short Term Scholar**	(less than 22 days) 21 days
6. Has a 4 year post-secondary degree related to	**Trainee, Specialty**	(22 days) to 18 months

Hints & Tips

Maintaining Status in TraiNet Web:

Unlike TraiNet Desktop where both Program and Participant Status fields must be maintained manually by the R1 TraiNet Operator, TraiNet Web maintains Program Status automatically based upon the start and end dates of the program. The TraiNet Operator need only maintain Participant Status; however, should you wish to terminate or cancel a TraiNet Web program you do this by changing the status of all participants in the program.

Go to the Participant screen, indicated by this icon . Change the status of all participants to Cancelled or Terminated. This will change the Program Status, as well.

TraiNet Web Users – Hints and Tips

- Never use the internet browser <Back> button to go back in the screen. Use the <Previous> or <Cancel> buttons on the TraiNet Web page.

- If you use the keyboard to move from field to field, use the Tab key, not the ENTER key.

- If you use a scrolling mouse, be careful to not change the selection in your pick list if it is active just after you've selected an item. Click on a blank part of the web page to de-activate your pick list selection before using the scrolling mouse to reposition the page.

- You can always see the name of your program and the start and end dates at the bottom of the screen as you move through the data-entry wizard.

- Program Status is maintained automatically by TraiNet Web based upon start and end date of the program. Trainee status is

the objective of the visit		
7. Otherwise:	**Trainee, Non-Specialty**	(22 days) to 18 months

More TraiNet Web Updates – release 13

TraiNet Web has been updated once again to provide more functionality. Following, is a list of new and important features:

- **Mission-centric Approach:** these features were added to make the mission's job of looking over data submitted by a range of contractors much easier. Features include:
  - Program Search:
    - Can now find programs explicitly shared to the site, as well as programs linked to the top-tier data.
    - Programs can be found according to Site Code.
  - Site Code is now more visible throughout the application. It can be seen under the Program Name on each section of the program's information page.
- **Participant Search:** users will now be able to search for participants with the following filters: first name, last name, gender, training location, program start/end dates and owner site.
- **Data Export:** Users having a data export role will be allowed to access the data export portion of TraiNet. This screen will allow users to export certain portions of data from the system. If you have a need to export data from TraiNet, please contact the Help Desk at jvisa@devis.com.
- **Reports:**
  - Added Program End Date to *Program by Strategic Objective* report.
  - Added Component information to the *Program List* report.
  - Removed blank columns in the *Program by Strategic Objective* report that exports data to a csv (Excel or Access) file.

TraiNet Web is currently undergoing further modifications. We'll be sending you another update in our next newsletter. Stay tuned!

USAID/Egypt Launches First Country-Specific Technical Support Site for TraiNet/VCS

Devis returned from a two-week TraiNet Web installation and training visit to USAID/Egypt in January. Twenty-four training contractors and the mission were converted from TraiNet Desktop to TraiNet Web and trained in the use of the software.

As part of this trip a new technical support web site was conceived and launched with the goal of providing Egypt-specific technical assistance for TraiNet and the VCS, as well as policy and procedural guidance on issues pertaining to training. See the new link on our web site at http://usaidtraining.devis.com.

Congratulations to USAID/Egypt!

maintained manually by the data-entry operator.

- You can always go back and edit program, funding and participant data by clicking on the icons for your program on the Program List screen.

- When you initially add funding in the program wizard you can only add general budget categories for trainee, travel and instruction. After the program is entered you can go back to the funding section and break out the budget into more detailed categories.

- When you are viewing or editing program, participant, or funding data, you can always return to the Program List by selecting the <Return to Program List> hyperlink on the left side of the screen.

- When you're finished with your data entry, make sure you select the <Logout> hyperlink before closing the browser with the <Close> button in the top right of the screen.

- You can always return to the main TraiNet Web page by clicking on the TraiNet Web icon on the top left of the screen.

TraiNet Desktop Data Transfer Clarification:

Periodically a TraiNet Desktop user reports that they transferred data but it was not received by another site, or by their VCS Verifier. If this happens to you, transfer data again using the "All Data" option.

The options that transfer "All data that has been added or updated" have proven to be unreliable and should not be used.

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